

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings include changes to Fig. 5. The replacement sheet, which includes Figs. 5-6, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 5-6. Fig. 6 has not been amended. The amendment to Fig. 5 is described in detail on page 14 of this paper.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are presented for examination, with Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 having been withdrawn. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention. For the reasons set forth below, Applicant believes that the rejections should be withdrawn and that the Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are in condition for allowance.

REJECTION OF CLAIM 1 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

The Examiner rejected Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the rejection is now moot and should be withdrawn.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 AND 11 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hasegawa, Japanese Publication No. 09-117567 ("Hasegawa") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,001,016 to Walker *et al.* ("Walker"). For at least the following reasons, the Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and requests reconsideration and withdrawal thereof. The Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness. To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the Examiner must: (1) identify the reason why a person of ordinary skill in the art would have combined the teachings of the references; and (2) show that the references teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations.

CLAIM 1

The Applicant respectfully submits that Hasegawa and Walker fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of Claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention. The Examiner acknowledged that Hasegawa does not teach a medal keeping and paying system connected to a network. However, the Examiner alleged that Walker

discloses a credit and player system connected to a network, and that Walker in combination with Hasegawa renders the claimed invention unpatentable.

Walker discloses a network architecture system that differs from the system recited by Claim 1. Walker discloses a remote wagering terminal connected to a server through a terminal network, and slot machines that are connected to the server through a slot network. [3:60 – 4:22 and Fig. 1]. Walker discloses a system wherein the CPU 410 of the server 4 accesses a data storage device 440 internally through an internal bus or the like, without passing over/through the network communication port 450. [6:1-2 and Fig. 3]. As illustrated in Figure 3, Walker does not connect the CPU 410 of the server 4 with the data storage device 440 through a communication port 450. The clients 2, 5 and 6 access the data storage device 440 by first passing through the network communication port 450. [Fig. 3]. Thus in Walker, the clients 2, 5 and 6, and the server 4, gain access to the data storage device 440 through different routes (*i.e.*, the route for the clients 2, 5 and 6 first passes through the network communication port 450, whereas the server 4 uses a direct internal route that does not pass through the network communication port 450). [Fig. 3].

Walker does not describe or suggest a medal keeping and paying system as recited by Claim 1, wherein the processing section of the medal keeping and paying server apparatus includes a network interface and the processing section is connected to the operation information storing means via the network interface, and each of the processing sections of each of the plurality of medal keeping and paying client apparatuses include a network interface, wherein the processing sections of the plurality of medal keeping and paying client apparatuses are connected to the operation information storing means of the medal keeping and paying server apparatus via the network interface of each of the plurality of medal keeping and paying client apparatuses through the network to the network interface of the medal keeping and paying server apparatus. As noted in paragraphs [0007]-[0008] of the specification, in an embodiment of the present application it is an object of the embodiment to eliminate the problems of increased costs and managing complications typically associated with installing multiple medal keeping and

paying apparatuses, by providing a system wherein it is easy to install additional medal keeping and paying apparatuses and the system can be centrally managed.

In particular, the medal keeping and paying server apparatus includes an operation information storing means and the plurality of medal keeping and paying client apparatuses do not include an operation information storing means, thus the clients must connect to the server through a network to access the operation storing means of the server. However, if the server and client were simply connected to each other through the network, this typical connection would not reduce the operations costs and simplify management. In other words, a general server/client system such as the network architecture disclosed by Walker (as discussed above), wherein the hard disk of the server and the clients are connected to each other via the network through the CPU of the server (route 1), and the CPU of the server is directly connected to its own hard disk through its own internal bus (route 2), does not eliminate costs or simplify management of a medal keeping and paying system.

In an embodiment of the present invention, a client has its CPU connected with the hard disk of the server via the network interface of the client, through the network, to the network interface of the server, and likewise the CPU of the server is also connected to the hard disk of the server, through the network, to the network interface of the server. *See e.g.*, [0046]-[0047]; [0057]-[0060]; and Figs. 5 and 6. According to this embodiment of the present invention, the processing section of the server can access its own operation information storing means through its own network interface and the processing sections of the clients can access the operation information storing means of the server through the network interface of the server.

Therefore, the server and the clients share the same network interface for data access, and the processing sections of the clients and the server have equal access with respect to the operation information storing means. In a medal and keeping paying system there is constant reconciliation of numerous transactions so it is imperative that the processing sections of the clients have the same access priority (and not lower access

priority) as the processing section of the server to the operation information storing means. Thus, the communication protocols of the server and the clients are the same. As a result, software implementing the communication protocol for data access of the server is the same as that of the client, *i.e.*, one program for data access is applied to the server and the clients. Thereby, the claimed network architecture can further reduce costs and simplify management of data through the unification of the program for data access.

Walker clearly discloses a system that requires different communication protocols, *i.e.*, one communication protocol for the CPU of the server to the hard disk of the server, and a different communication protocol for the CPUs of the clients to access the hard disk of the server. Therefore, in Walker software implementing the communication protocol for data access of the server would substantially differ from software implementing the communication protocol for the clients.

Thus, the present invention as recited by Claim 1, can adopt a single program for data access between all the processing sections and the operation information storing means (*i.e.*, there is only one route, in contrast to the multiple routes disclosed by Walker). *See* [0060]. Walker does not describe or suggest the network structure or operation of the medal keeping and paying system as recited by Claim 1. None of the drawings or corresponding sections of the detailed description of Walker cited by the Examiner show otherwise.

Therefore, the Examiner has failed to show that Hasegawa in combination with Walker teaches or suggests all the elements of Claim 1. Thus Claim 1 is patentable over Hasegawa in view of Walker and the rejection should be withdrawn.

CLAIMS 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention. Claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are ultimately dependent from Claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the same reasons discussed above, Claims 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are patentable over Hasegawa in view of Walker and the rejections should be withdrawn.

AMENDMENTS TO FIGURE 5

Figure 5 has been amended to clarify the structure of a processing section of a medal keeping and paying server apparatus according to an embodiment of the invention. The original Figure 5 included the Hard Disk 65 connected to the bus along with the MPU Card 59, LAN Card 3, Voice Card 67 and Memory 63. Amendments to Figure 5 include deleting the connection between the Hard Disk 65 and the bus, and inserting a connection between the Hard Disk 65 and the LAN Card 3. No new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing is submitted as a complete response to the Office Action identified above. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 are pending in this application. Applicant believes this application is now in condition for allowance and solicits a notice to that effect. If there are any issues that can be addresses via telephone, the Examiner is asked to contact the undersigned as 404.685.6799. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0855.

Respectfully submitted,



Brenda O. Holmes, Esq.
Reg. No. 40,339

KILPATRICK STOCKTON LLP
1100 Peachtree Street
Suite 2800
Atlanta, Georgia 30309-4530
(404) 815-6500 (direct)
(404) 815-6555 (fax)
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